

## FinPro Member Update – Edition 21, 2021

Good afternoon,

A different take on my message today - [WATCH NOW](#)

Stay safe and look after yourself and your families,

Bradley

**Bradley Thomas**  
President – FinPro  
CEO Hepburn Shire



## Upcoming events

**11 August 2021** – FinPro Webinar – Let’s talk Deliberative Engagement [read more here](#)

**5 – 8 September 2021** – Leadership Program at Country Place Kalorama

**20 – 22 October 2021** – FinPro Annual Conference at RACV Cape Schanck

**3 December 2021** – FinPro End of Year Lunch and AGM – Leonda by the Yarra

## Membership

Welcome to **Aidan McIntosh** who has joined the team at the City of Greater Bendigo as Project Accountant. Aidan has replaced FinPro member **Nathan Cutting** who has moved to the role of Management Accountant (Capex) at the same council.

Welcome back to **Kerrie Jordan** who has joined the team at Moonee Valley City Council as Acting CFO whilst **Vanessa Baldori** has moved to a project role for the implementation of their new Finance System.

## Thank-you to our 2021 Corporate Partners

- APV Valuers and Asset Management
- Commonwealth Bank
- CT Management
- .id informed decisions
- Ibis Information Systems
- MAGIQ Software
- LG Solutions
- Maia Financial
- New Era Management
- VOTAR Partners
- Vision Super
- Westpac

## Seeking Mentors for our 2021 FinPro Mentoring Program

***“Don’t assume that everyone has the insight and access that you do. Becoming a mentor is a rewarding way to challenge yourself and develop your leadership skills”***

Mentoring can provide a great opportunity to share your skills and experiences with others and is a really valuable experience, both for the mentor and the mentee.

We are seeking EOIs from within our FinPro membership from anyone interested in taking on a role as a mentor. No previous experience in mentoring is necessary. We will provide both training and resources, however you must have at least 8 years’ experience in finance, including at least 3 in a leadership role in the LG sector, along with a desire to support the growth and development of others in the sector.

The mentees will be the 12 successful applicants who have applied, and who attend our Financial Management and Leadership Development Program in September this year. The mentoring program will be part of the year-long program they undertake to further develop the skill sets they need to take the next step in their career. Each ‘emerging leader’ will be paired with a mentor from within our FinPro Membership.

As previously stated, past experience as a mentor is not necessary. FinPro will provide training for mentors as well as a series of resources to assist you to succeed in this role.



If you are interested in being involved as a mentor, please [refer to our website](#) for more information. EOIs must be submitted by 12 noon Friday 27 August 2021.

If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to contact FinPro’s Executive Officer, Gab Gordon on 0400 114 015 or via email [gabrielle@finpro.org.au](mailto:gabrielle@finpro.org.au)

## Technical Update

### Local Government Act Implementation Update

The new Local Government Act 2020 is the most ambitious reform to the local government sector in over 30 years. The Act will improve local government democracy, accountability and service delivery for all Victorians. Copies of relevant information is available on the [LGV website](#)

### Important Dates in relation to the LG Act:

#### September 2021

- [2020-21 Annual Report – by 30 September 2021](#)

#### October 2021

- [Financial Plan – 31 October 2021](#)
- [Council Plan – 31 October 2021](#)
- [Community Vision – 31 October 2021](#)

#### December 2021

- Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy – 31 December
- Workforce Plan – 31 December
- Recruitment Policy – 31 December
- Staff Code of Conduct – 31 December
- Complaints Policy – 31 December
- Procurement Policy – 31 December

#### 2022

- [Asset Plan – 30 June 2022](#)

### New Good Complaint Handling Guide – released by the Victorian Ombudsman

Please find here the link to the [Ombudsman's Councils and Complaints - A Good Practice Guide edition 2](#), tabled 23 July 2021 in the Victorian Parliament.

We encourage all our members to read through this document.

It is also worth noting that the Victorian Ombudsman distributed a newsletter. Members can sign up for it by clicking the link at the bottom of this page: <https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/our-impact/newsletters/>



## Deliberative Engagement Webinar – Wednesday 11 August 2021 at 12.30pm

### Let's talk 'Deliberative Engagement'

Join us for a lunchtime session to talk about 'deliberative engagement'.

### **REGISTER NOW**

With the recent changes to the Local Government Act 2020, do you want to know more about what deliberative engagement with the community is? What does it mean for your 10-year financial plan (and next year's budget engagement planning)?

We will hear from experts in the field - Capire Consulting Group and then have a Q&A with a panel of council representatives.

A survey will be sent out to each council prior to the webinar to capture all of your thoughts and you can ask your questions on the day as well.

### Agenda:

12.30-1 Capire overview of engagement and deliberative engagement and some ideas about LTFP

1-1.30 Panel conversation (Council representatives and Capire) answer the questions that we get from the questionnaire and general chat questions

### Speakers:

- Clare Murrell, Associate / Sector Lead, Local Government - Capire Consulting Group
- Niamh Moynihan, Associate Infrastructure Lead, Capire Consulting Group
- Simone Wickes, Manager Financial & Corporate Planning, Frankston City Council and FinPro Executive Member
- Nathan Morsillo, Manager Financial Strategy, Greater Bendigo City Council

**Capire Consulting have a range of online tools to assist councils to navigate the Engagement process and we thank Capire for making them available for our members – [see here for more](#).**

## West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation's Transformation

Yesterday the following media release announced the transition of the West Gippsland Regional Library to a not-for-profit, from a library corporation and is shared here for your information.

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### ***Myli launches***

*Myli – My Community Library Ltd – has announced its formation as a not-for-profit provider of library services to succeed West Gippsland Regional Library Corporation (WGRLC).*

*This transformation follows the requirement of the new Victorian Local Government Act 2020 for library corporations to wind up within the next 10 years even though Victoria's Auditor General has concluded that 'regional library corporations and co-operative models are, overall, more efficient than standalone Council libraries'.*

*Building on its success as a leading library corporation, Myli has a model which far exceeds the traditional role of libraries as merely book depositories and emphasises the importance of public libraries within the community.*

*Myli's bold initiatives reflect its vision of connected, inclusive and resilient communities that are supported to grow and thrive.*

*One is the promotion of 24 hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week libraries.*

*"We could have just tried extended opening hours, but if gyms can provide 24/7 access, why not public libraries?" says Leanne Williams, Myli's Chief Executive Officer.*

*Myli has Victoria's first 24/7 library and by the end of the year will have the first two.*

*By June next year, it will have a third which may well be the third in Victoria.*

*The plan is for all Myli libraries to be open 24/7.*

*Another Victorian first, and possibly Australian first is Books by Us, a project in which Myli enabled a group of primary schoolchildren each to write and oversee the production of their own book.*

*Myli staff facilitate the program in which a published author coaches students to write their own book, understand the publication process, visit a publishing house and have their book published.*

*This is a different and exciting way to promote literacy and a passion for knowledge in children.*

*The coronavirus has been a roadblock to building on this pilot. However. Myli is about to take the project to a second school and already has a waiting list of schools wanting to be involved.*

*Myli engages and listens to the community's ever-changing needs by delivering relevant physical, virtual and flexible services.*

*Myli's online focus includes providing video programs and blogs on topics such as mental health and employment as well as in investing in e-resources to help the community respond to its social and economic challenges.*

*The online reach extends Myli's current geographical borders and the organisation's name change reflects this new reality.*

***If you would like to learn more about the transformation they have undertaken please contact Leanne Williams, CEO at [leannew@wgrlc.vic.gov.au](mailto:leannew@wgrlc.vic.gov.au)***

## Join the conversation

As most members will know, we support a FinPro Member-wide Forum, enabling members to ask questions, share information and provide answers. The forum is on Yammer and if you are a member and not currently involved, please contact Gab to join – [gabrielle@finpro.org.au](mailto:gabrielle@finpro.org.au)

## FinPro Advocacy - Social and Affordable Housing

FinPro has been working closely with the MAV to advocate on behalf of the sector regarding the Victorian Government's \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build.

Over the last month, representatives of the FinPro executive and MAV have developed an issues paper assessing impacts on Councils' revenue resulting from this initiative.

The Issues Paper "Social Housing and Funding for Council Services" can be [downloaded here](#).

The MAV Members brief distributed to Council CEO and can be [downloaded here](#)

### **The Issues paper raises a series of questions on the policy proposal, including:**

- The evidence base behind some of the policy assumptions that social benefits will offset future cost of service provision
- Impact on Councils and rate-payers from shortfall in funding if rates exemptions are granted under this housing initiative
- What consultation mechanisms are proposed by the State Government to properly canvas the policy principles.

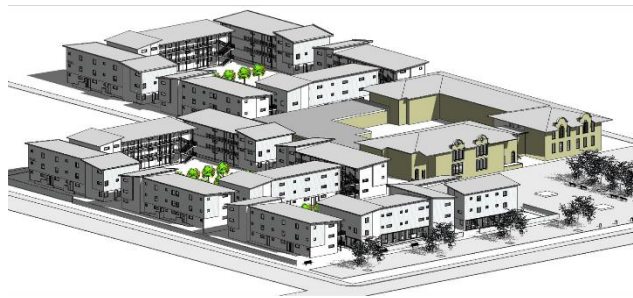
### **Key points from the work to date are:**

- MAV/FinPro analysis estimates a \$136.8 million a year impact in rates revenue if social housing owned and operated by the Victorian Government and community housing organisations were to be exempted from the need to pay rates. If the exemption goes ahead, in just 10 years this amount would compound to an additional \$1.6 billion
- The councils most impacted are located where many households and homeowners are classified as being in poverty and/or under mortgage stress. This is an issue of significant concern.
- The Victorian Government's ownership and contribution on behalf of its tenants to the cost of services provided by councils has been a long-standing state government provided service. It is also contrary to the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement which clearly identifies social housing provision as a state government responsibility and its associated costs.
- We are surprised this proposal is being canvassed now, given in its response to the rating review in December last year the Victorian Government did not flag any intention to exempt such a significant class of properties from council's main source of revenue.
- Individually, councils may wish to exempt some social housing dwellings from the need to pay rates due to other benefits arising from the Big Housing Build. The critical discussion point is that this should be at the discretion of councils, not mandated by the Victorian Government without their agreement.

This has been a great opportunity for FinPro to contribute to policy discussion which impacts Councils' finances. Thank you to those FinPro executives who participated in this work.

We welcome comments from our members.

For further information regarding the issues paper, contact Rosemary Hancock, Manager Health and Local Economies - email [rhancock@mav.asn.au](mailto:rhancock@mav.asn.au)



## Remote working – the new reality?

Earlier this year we heard from Keenan Jackson, Economist with .id. Keenan presented at our webinar to discuss the economy and we have booked him up again to present at this year's annual conference (20 – 22 October 2021).

Keenan published an interesting article last week discussing remote working, something we have all experienced over the last 18 months, and will continue into the future. We share it with you here:

*History shows that the recovery period following economic downturns can often accelerate the transition of industries or magnify trends that were already occurring in the economy. In this blog, Keenan explores one of the key trends set to continue post-COVID – **remote working**.*

*One of the more common questions we have been asked over the last year is how the COVID pandemic lockdowns will impact journey to work patterns in the future. With many office workers in capital cities having prolonged experience of working from home recently, maybe the forecast 'work anywhere' model envisioned at the onset of the internet will finally come to fruition. Certainly, many companies have enacted more flexible policies to support this as the pandemic continued.*

### **What happened during COVID?**

*At the start of the pandemic last year, governments in Australia implemented strict stay at home policies for non-essential workers. This saw a plummet in work trips across major cities and an increase in time spent at home. Using google mobility data, we saw that trips to Melbourne's CBD (City of Melbourne LGA) fell by 66% compared to pre-COVID, Sydney fell by 61%. On the flip side, the time spent at home increased substantially for many inner-city suburbs within easy commuting distance to the CBD. The chart below presents the LGAs in Australia where time at home increased*



by more than 25% (average of 4 hours per day). Aside from all being in Greater Sydney or Greater Melbourne, the other common factor for these LGAs is industry of employment. In 14 out of 20, the top industry of employment for residents is Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (NIEIR, 2021). In the other 6, this industry is either the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> largest employer.

#### Increase in time spent at residence, April 2020

% increase from baseline (Jan-Feb 2020) duration of time spent at home

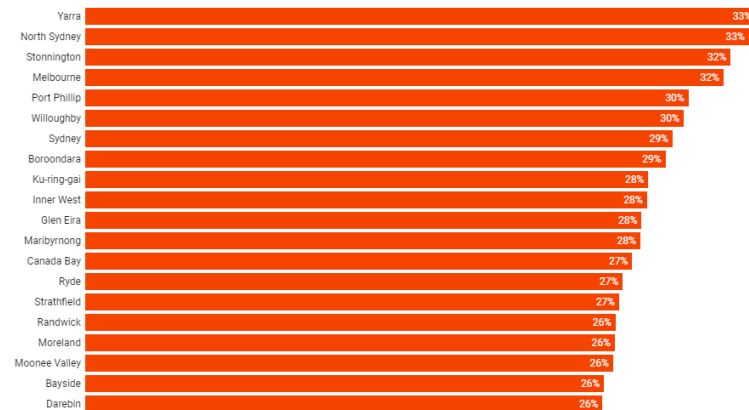


Chart: jd (informed decisions) - Source: Google Mobility Data, 2021 - Get the data - Created with Datawrapper

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## Current positions advertised on the [FinPro Website](#)

- **Accountant**
- Towong Shire Council
- <https://www.towong.vic.gov.au/about-council/careers/vacancies.asp>
- For further enquiries please contact Blair Phillips, Manager Finance on 02 6071 5100 or [blair.phillips@towong.vic.gov.au](mailto:blair.phillips@towong.vic.gov.au)
- Applications close 5pm, Sunday 8 August 2021
- **Accounting Business Partner**
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Refer to the [Council Website](#) for more information
- For further enquiries about this position should be directed to Claire Barnes, Manager Finance on 0428 301 120
- Applications close Sunday 9 August 2021
- **Manager Financial Services**
- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Refer to the [Council Website](#) for further information
- For more information, please contact Vaughan Williams, Director Corporate Services at [Vaughan.williams@ngshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:Vaughan.williams@ngshire.vic.gov.au) or call (03) 5358 8700
- Applications close 12.00pm Monday 9 August 2021.
- **Independent member Audit and Risk Committee**
- Yarra City Council
- Refer to the [Council Website](#) for further information
- Applications close Monday 9 August 2021 at 11.55pm



- **Coordinator Revenue and Rates**
- Whitehorse City Council
- <https://whitehorsecitycouncil.mercury.com.au>
- Further information regarding this position is available from Julia Cushing on 9262 6302
- Applications close Saturday 15 August, 2021
- **Financial Accountant**
- Whitehorse City Council
- <https://whitehorsecitycouncil.mercury.com.au>
- Further information regarding this position is available from Julia Cushing on 9262 6302
- Applications close Saturday 15 August, 2021

## FinPro Executive Team 2021

<b>President</b>	Bradley Thomas (Hepburn SC)
<b>Vice-President – Chair Professional Development</b>	Binda Gokhale (Wyndham CC)
<b>PD Committee Members</b>	Alan Wilson (Melbourne CC) Belinda Johnson (Southern Grampians SC) Charles Nganga (Casey CC) Melissa Baker (South Gippsland SC)
<b>Vice-President – Chair Technical</b>	Tony Rocca (Maroondah CC)
<b>Technical Committee Members</b>	Danny Wain (Monash CC) Fiona Rae (Golden Plains SC) Mark Montague (Whittlesea CC) Nathan Morsillo (Greater Bendigo CC) Simone Wickes (Frankston CC) Wei Chen (Yarra CC)
<b>Secretary / Treasurer</b>	Gabrielle Gordon

## FinPro Contact Details

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